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Joachim Gentz (Edinburgh)

HERMENEUTICS OF MULTIPLE SENSES: WANG JIE'S (FL. 1331–1380)
“EXPLANATIONS AND COMMENTARY WITH DIAGRAMS TO THE QINGJING
JING”¹

INTRODUCTION

Texts have often been arranged spatially in graphic charts to facilitate understanding of internal structures and to highlight different parts and their mutual relationships. In teaching and preaching contexts, diagrammatic representations are often regarded as more immediate and more economical than prose accounts. Yet, visual text representation has long been neglected in academic analysis because of academia's focus on sentential symbolic representation systems such as alphabetical, numerological and logical writing. Only with the new interest in different orders of knowledge and types of representation systems by philosophers, cognitive scientists, logicians and computer scientists research has been directed to diagrammatic representations and international conferences on that topic have been organized.² Following early attempts by Euler, scholars like Venn and Peirce have tried to perfect systems of diagrammatic representation in the realm of logical reasoning criticizing that only propositions that have a spatial relationship could be expressed through diagrams. Eco³, Evans⁴ and others have used historical diagrams as important sources in their analyses of European history of thought.

With the development of new text paradigms, semiology, and the visual turn in cultural studies the attention of some Chinese Studies scholars has been drawn to charts and diagrams (*tu* 圖).⁵ The *Yijing* 《易經》 is probably the best known Chinese text which operates with the interpretation of a specific system of signs (*xiang* 象) claiming the superiority of the diagrammatic mode of expression over the restraints of linguistic utterances.⁶ Following this tradition charts and diagrams have played a central role in the production of apocryphal texts (*chenwei* 讖緯) around the time of Wang Mang (45 BC-AD 23) that in turn influenced the use of visual elements in the Daoist traditions.⁷

Buddhist analytical *kewen* 科文 texts seem to form the origin of a tradition in China which departed from diagrams as prior focus of exegetical writing and in turn made use of diagrammatic representations in order to explain written texts, which held priority in the

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Buddhist tradition. Since the fourth century A.D. (with Dao'an 道安), Buddhist *kewen* have been used as teaching tools which by means of spatial arrangements of texts elucidated argumentative hierarchies and logical structures and explained the complex compositions of multilayered logical arguments woven through the texts.⁸ One effect of these texts on the Chinese use of diagrams was that the hierarchical relationship of diagram and text was turned upside down. Text was in this Buddhist context not considered as a secondary explanative instrument to elucidate the diagram; it was the diagrammatic form which was taken to elucidate the holy Buddhist texts. Diagrams thus obtained a new status of text-exegetical tools. This had an important impact on other Chinese traditions of thought. Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) was probably among the first who applied this Buddhist mode of diagrammatic text representation to Confucian texts. In Song times this mode of text representation became well established in the Confucian tradition in educative contexts. It seems to have been taken over from the Confucian tradition (which had taken it from the Buddhist) by Daoist scholars in the 13th or 14th century, and it was from there that it became established as a second mode of text-diagram relationship in the Daoist tradition. This is noteworthy because the tradition of using *tu*-diagrams for didactic purposes and instructions for healing, self-cultivation and meditation as well as the particular emphasis on the importance and efficacy of mysterious and magical diagrams and *fu*-talismans in religious ritual was by that time, and continued to be, very strong in Daoism.⁹

The earliest (and so far only) Daoist text I found which makes use of this exegetical mode of diagrammatic text explanation is a commentary attributed to Wang Jie 王玠, a 14th century Daoist scholar of the Quanzhen 全真 school. His “Analytical Commentary with Graphics to the Wondrous Scripture of the Eternal Purity and Tranquillity as taught by the Supreme Venerable Sovereign” *Taishang Laojun Shuo Chang Qingjing Miaoqing Zuantu Jiezhushu* 《太上老君說常清靜妙經纂圖解註》 is different from other Quanzhen *neidan* 內丹 commentaries such as Liu Chuxuan's 劉處玄 (1147-1203) *Huangdi Yinfu Jing Zhu* 《黃帝陰符經註》, which mainly serve as didactic instructions aiming to decode hidden meaning in the language of the text.¹⁰ It also differs from *neidan* texts such as Qiu Chuji's 丘處機 (1148–1227) *Dadan Zhizhi* 《大丹直指》 or Wang Jie's own *Huanzhen Ji* 《還真集》, which use diagrams and images to illustrate inner alchemical practice.¹¹ In contrast to these texts, this commentary attempts at explaining the philosophical and doctrinal meaning of the text in the light of the three teachings and in relation to concepts of inner alchemy. Accordingly the diagrams are less illustrations for Daoist practice than hermeneutical models of the textual

composition of thought and the argumentative pattern of the text, much more like the Buddhist and Confucian text related diagrams. In the following this text will therefore be analyzed as a peculiar mode of Chinese text hermeneutics in the Daoist tradition.

Given the lucky case that Wang Jie added both, a textual and a diagrammatical commentary to the canonical text of the *Qingjing Jing* 《清靜經》, the leading questions of the investigation will be why Wang Jie used two different modes of interpretation, what is the relationship between these two commentaries and where are the differences? Are there any specific exegetical moves which the diagrammatic mode employs in relation to the written commentary to the text? Does the diagram visualize, illustrate, explain, further develop or complement the written commentary or is there an exegetical difference between the two commentarial modes and a particular hermeneutic function to each of them?

I. BACKGROUND

Wang Jie 王玠 (fl. 1331–1380) is considered a representative of the Southern Quanzhen school after its unification with the Northern school of Quanzhen Daoism and a scholar of inner alchemy (*neidan*). His extensive work, however, although showing Quanzhen features, does not explicitly mention any Quanzhen affiliation, nor is he mentioned in the known Quanzhen histories.¹² His courtesy name (*zi*字) was Daoyuan 道淵, his pseudonym (*hao*號) Hunran zi 混然子.¹³ Wang Jie was born in Xiujiang 脩江 near Nanchang 南昌 (Jiangxi) in the late Yuan dynasty and died sometime after 1392. He was a friend of the 43rd Zhengyi 正一 Patriarch Zhang Yuchu 張宇初 (1359/61–1410), who wrote a preface to Wang Jie's *Huanzhen Ji* (dated 1392). Wang is known for several commentaries, including those on the *Yinfu Jing* 《陰符經》, the *Ruyao Jing* 《入藥鏡》, and the *Qingjing Jing*. Like his acquaintance¹⁴ Li Daochun 李道純 (fl. 1288-1306) and Bo Yuchan 白玉蟾 (1194-1229) who both wrote commentaries on the *Qingjing Jing*, Wang Jie might be classified as belonging to a “middle school” in Daoism, in between the Northern tradition of the Zhong-Lü 鍾呂 and Quanzhen traditions and the Southern tradition. Like Li Daochun, Wang emphasizes the unity of the three teachings (*sanjiao* 三教) in theory as well as in exegetical practice by quoting and referring to Buddhist and Confucian texts. The *Yijing* is one of his most important exegetical reference works.¹⁵

II. THE *TAISHANG LAOJUN SHUOCHANG QINGJING MIAOJING ZUANTU JIEZHU*

《太上老君說常清靜妙經纂圖解註》

Wang Jie's commentary is special in that the diagrammatical form is not used as an exegetical representation of the main text. Instead we have a threefold structure of first, the basic text of the *Qingjing Jing*, second, a written commentary by Wang Jie appended to each paragraph and, third, a diagrammatic commentary of the same author following upon the written commentary. We thus have two exegetical modes of commenting one main text, which in their difference are mutual supplementary. From Song times on we find many illustrated editions of canonical texts which use the title "*Zuantu Hu Zhu*" (纂圖互註). The meaning of *tu* in these new editions reaches from illustrations of objects (such as in ritual or medical books) to tables (like in *Yijing* editions or editions on phonetics), main ideas, or the compositional structure of text contents.¹⁶ The *tu* diagrams in the second commentary are not diagrammatic representations of the canonical or the first commentarial text, but are an additional exegetical layer further explaining the text.

1. Preface

In the preface Wang Jie states that it was the reading of the *Yijing*, which revealed the true and deep meaning of the text to him because of its written and diagrammatical explanations. Two important points have to be noted here. First, it was a text from the orthodox Confucian canon, which revealed the true meaning of a Daoist text to Wang. Wang writes that he was further exploring the way of alchemic immortals and of prajñā wisdom in the text (*jiu qi jinxian boruo zhi dao* 究其金仙般若之道) to melt them together (*ruo he fujie* 若合符節). This last formulation of his exegetical method is taken from Zhu Xi's preface to the *Zhongyong* 《中庸》 and thus further bases itself on a major tradition of Neo-Confucian hermeneutics claiming to follow a three teachings (*sanjiao*) perspective, which was prevalent in his time, particularly in the Quanzhen tradition.¹⁷ The second important point to note is the fact that the *Yijing* is taken as a model of a hermeneutical method comprising both, diagrams and written commentaries, which is exactly what he does himself although the diagrams clearly follow after the text and the text, unlike the *Yijing* text, is thus not an explanation of the diagram.

Wang proceeds in describing his own exegetical method and, again using Zhu Xi's exegetical terminology of the *Zhongyong* preface, states that he wants to connect text and commentary directly (*guantong* 貫通) and also in indirect ways from the side (*quchang pangtong* 曲暢旁通).

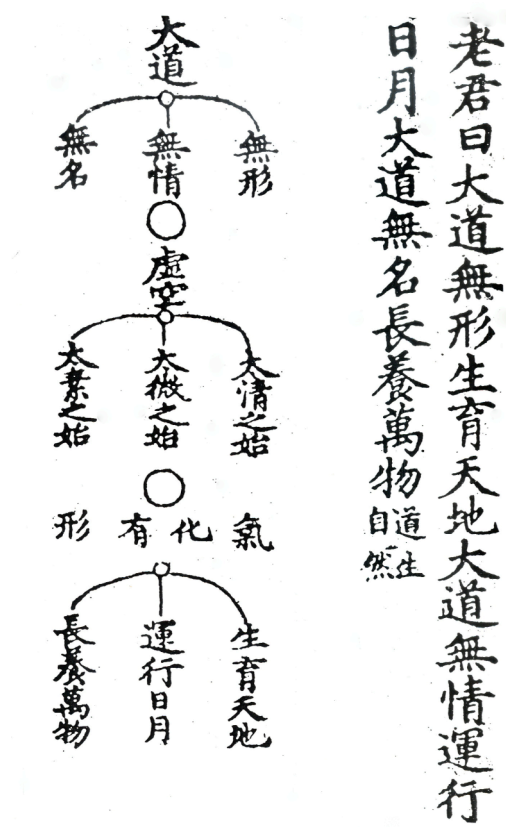
The preface indicates that the *Yijing* forms the methodological basis of Wang's commentary in his three teachings approach as well as his exegetical forms using textual (*jiezhu* 解註) and diagrammatic (*zuantu* 纂圖) commentaries. The *Zhongyong* preface of Zhu Xi provides the literary model from which Wang took technical terminology and theoretical concepts for the explanation of his own commentarial work.

2. Commentary

I shall focus on the first four (§§ 2-5) and the ninth (§9) of the 27 paragraphs into which Wang divides the text of the *Qingjing jing* (including its title as §1), because they are representative to demonstrate Wang's hermeneutics.

Paragraph §2

In the second paragraph Wang's commentary to the first passage of the *Qingjing Jing* runs as follows:



Laozi says:

1A The Great Tao has no form;

1B It brings forth and raises heaven and earth.

2A The Great Tao has no feelings;

2B It regulates the course of the sun and the moon.

3A The Great Tao has no name;

3B It raises and nourishes the myriad beings.¹⁸

The passage consists of three parallel parts, divided into A: a description of a specific feature of the Dao and B: a specific action ascribed to it. In his textual commentary Wang first reorders the text in putting the three A-parts together claiming that they belong together, splitting them off from the B-parts of the parallel constructions. He then introduces three new cosmogonical elements, the three *qi* (氣): Great Clarity *taiqing* 太清, Great Subtle *taiwei* 太

微, and Great Purity *taisu* 太素. Wang then introduces the further cosmogonical concept of Yin-Yang cosmology found in early Han texts such as *Huainanzi* “Tianwen Xun” or *Huangdi Neijing* “Su Wen” and the more elaborated *Yijing* based cosmology of Shao Yong 邵雍 (1011–1077), very much in line with what we find in earlier Quanzhen texts by Qiu Chuji and others.¹⁹ He orders the three B-parts about the specific actions of the Dao in a sequence of cosmological development. Thus Wang interprets the text passage in his textual commentary as a description of a cosmogonical process in which the A-parts of the three parallel sentences form the first stage, a second stage of three *qi* is then introduced, and the B-parts of the three parallel sentences form the third stage. The description of this cosmogonical process contains passages which we find verbatim also in his commentary to the *Yinfu Jing*.²⁰ He also quotes from the *Taiji Tu Shuo* 《太極圖說》 of Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017–1073). This is relevant for two reasons. First, because this shows that he clearly inserts fixed elements of external discourses into his text explanations. Second, because he uses further parts of the *Taiji Tu Shuo* throughout his commentary and takes Zhou Dunyi’s *Taiji Tu*²¹ as diagrammatic commentary to paragraph 4 thus not providing an own diagram for this paragraph (only). At the end of the commentary Wang relates this cosmological narrative to the human self and turns the general reflection into the perspective of the first person (*wo* 我). This cosmogonical interpretation with the personal turn is given authority through a quote from chapter 25 of the *Daode Jing* 《道德經》 in which the cosmogonical process is in a similar way conceptualized and turned to the first person (*wu* 吾). This quote ends with, and thus leads over to, the well known saying: “I do not know its name, I call it Dao, forced to give it a name I name it great...” It is this passage of the *Daode Jing*, which is the basis of the next text passage of the *Qingjing Jing*.²²

If we turn to the diagrammatic commentary we recognize a diagrammatic representation of the cosmogonical narrative of the textual commentary. The three stages of the cosmogonical process are arranged in a spatial order showing the first parts as three aspects of the Great Dao. The second part positioned in the middle of the diagram consists of the three newly introduced *qi*-elements, which are in this diagram related to the new central concept of emptiness (*xukong* 虛空), which only appears as utmost void (*zhixu* 至虛) in the textual commentary. At the bottom of the diagram the three second parts of the parallel sentences of the *Qingjing Jing* are related to the process of the transformation of formless *qi* to something having form.

In this spatial arrangement of the textual elements the two different directions of the development become much clearer. On the one side the vertical movement from top to bottom stage is clearly visible. On the other side the strict parallel spatial arrangement suggests a horizontal movement within each stage from right to left, which also indicates a development within each stage and a correlation between the three *qi* and the corresponding elements above and below in the vertical line.

To conclude, the diagrammatic commentary in this case basically follows the textual commentary. It supplements and further clarifies it in two main points:

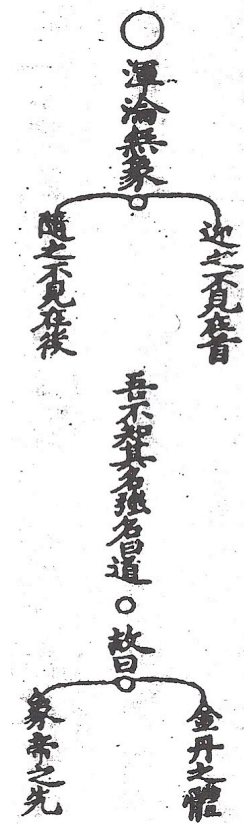
1. It marks and defines the three different stages as unities with three aspects.
2. It demonstrates, through its order, the correlative relationship of the three *qi* to the other elements and suggests that an identical relation between the three elements has to be proposed in each stage.

Yet, the final point of the written commentary, the turn to the first person, is not depicted in the diagram.

Paragraph §3

The third paragraph is rather short, it only consists of text and commentary of one abbreviated quote from *Daode Jing* 25, which had been quoted in the commentary to paragraph two before: *Wu bu zhi qi ming. Qiang ming yue dao.* 吾不知其名。強名曰道。I do not know its name, forced to name it I call it “Dao”. Wang starts by giving a few names or features ascribed to the Dao in the *Daode Jing*: great: *da* 大 (DDJ 25),²³ overflowing: *chong* 沖 (DDJ 4) and empty: *xu* 虛 (DDJ 5). He then again relates it to the human self and turns to the first person perspective (*wo* 我) to explain how the Dao is connected to the physical world and the human self. In order to explain this twofold aspect of the Dao – having no name and yet being named, being empty and yet being embodied – Wang makes use of the concept of *ti* 體 and *yong* 用, which, first used by Wang Bi 王弼 in his *Daode Jing* commentary, became a popular philosophical concept through the later Buddhist usage until it was then adapted by Neo-Confucians and became a central analytical concept in Zhu Xi’s philosophy. From then on this concept was broadly used in both Buddhist and Confucian traditions and Wang here quotes one of the most often cited phrases in regard to *ti-yong* from Cheng Yi’s preface to the *Yizhuan* 易傳: “*ti* and *yong* have one source—there is no gap between the apparent and the subtle 體用一源，顯微無間.”²⁴ In his *Huanzhen Ji*, Wang draws in the same way on the concept of *ti* and *yong* to explain the relationship of nature (*xing*) and life (*ming*) using the

same quote from Cheng Yi's *Yizhuan* preface.²⁵ To support the text's claim of the inexpressibility of the Dao Wang at the end of this paragraph quotes *Daode Jing* 21, *Lunyu* 《論語》 9.4 and *Yijing* "Xici" 〈繫辭〉, again drawing on Confucian and Daoist sources.



The diagram is split into two branches with phrases of *Daode Jing* 14, a chapter which talks about the paradox of naming the nameless: “encountering it [head-on] you don’t see its head, following it [from behind] you don’t see its back (*ying zhi bu jian qi shou, sui zhi bu jian qi hou* 迎之不見其首，隨之不見其後)”. These two phrases, which describe one phenomenon from two different perspectives show that there is actually no split into front and back. They thus illustrate the ineffectual attempt of splitting something that is not divided. In the middle of the diagram Wang positions the full quote of the *Qingjing Jing* and as a conclusion at the bottom he adds another two branches, one quoting from *Daode Jing* 4 (to which he had alluded at the beginning of his commentary through the term *chong* 沖) on the left and one taking up the notion of *ti* in relation to inner alchemy on the right. The combination of these two phrases suggests again that there is no point in splitting up *ti* and *yong* or the phrase which corresponds to the quoted phrase of *Daode Jing* 4 (before forms and gods “*xiangdi zhi qian*” 象帝之先), which uses again the central formulation from the main text “*wu bu zhi [shui zi]*” 吾不知[誰子] (I don’t know [whose child it is]) referring back to *Daode Jing* 25 which the *Qingjing Jing* passage refers to. The horizontal relationship between the two sides is not very strong.

The difference between text and diagram here mainly lies in the written commentary being more explanative and theoretical than the diagram in regard to how this paradoxical structure of the Dao relates to the human self. The textual commentary constructs complex arguments and operates with the philosophical concepts of *ti* and *yong* thereby relating the main text’s meaning to the embodiment of the Dao. Explicit quotes support these arguments. The diagram by contrast arranges phrases, mostly well known quotes, in a spatial order and inserts logical markers such as “therefore it is said” (*gu yue* 故曰) to construct a simple hierarchical argument in a rather schematic way. We don’t find the *ti-yong* pair in the diagram and, like before, no reference to the physical world or the human self. In contrast to the text every form of formal appearance or embodiment of the Dao (here expressed through the term “*hunlun* 渾淪” from the first chapter of the *Liezi*) is negated.

Paragraph §4

The fourth paragraph of the text somehow contradicts what I wrote above purporting that in this diagram-commentary the priority between diagram and text was turned around. In this example, diagram and text were designed independently from each another. Wang Jie in this case – the only exception among the 25 commentarial diagrams in the text – uses the diagram of the Ultimate (*taiji tu* 太極圖) of Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 to explain a passage from the *Qingjing Jing*. For our investigation it is important that he inserts this well-known diagram, first, because he uses a diagram that was used in both, Daoist and Confucian traditions²⁶ and also in other Quanzhen *neidan* texts such as Chen Zhixu's 陳致虛 (b. 1290) *Shangyang Zi Jindan Dayao Tu* 《上陽子金丹大要圖》 written around 1331.²⁷ Second, because he uses the diagram in the same way as his own diagrams thus claiming the same level of truth and interpretative status also for his own diagrams.

The text passage of the *Qingjing Jing* leads over from the more abstract philosophical thoughts on the Dao to its relation to heaven and earth and the myriad things. The text has a simple structure. It uses a sequence of contrasting concepts in a correlation scheme well known from the “Xici” chapter of the *Yijing* and related Neo-Confucian texts after Zhou Dunyi and Shao Yong and ends with a statement on the production process of the myriad things.

The Tao can be pure or turbid, moving or tranquil.

Heaven is pure, earth is turbid; Heaven is moving, earth is tranquil.

The male is pure, the female is turbid; The male is moving, the female is tranquil.

Descending from the origin, Flowing toward the end, The myriad beings are being born. Purity - the source of turbidity, Movement - the root of tranquillity.²⁸

In his written commentary Wang again refers to the cosmogonical process of the Dao's transformation of one into two and of two into ten thousand kinds of things in the physical world. Wang starts with a paraphrase of *Laozi* 42 and then quotes several passages from Zhou Dunyi's *Taiji Tu Shuo* 《太極圖說》, combining *Laozi* and Zhou's *Taiji Tu* in his cosmogonical narrative. He then inserts even more correlative binary concepts, taken from the *Yijing* “Xici” (explicitly quoted as *Yi* “Xi”) and the *Zhongyong* (quoted as Confucius' saying, *Kong yun* 孔云); he connects it to how Buddhas and immortals are born out of it and then refers to Zhou Dunyi's *Taiji Tu* as a text expressing exactly this meaning. He then again gives an alchemist interpretation of the text explicitly translating the *Yijing* terms into the terminology of inner alchemy: “talking about the *Zhouyi* in terms of inner alchemy” (*Zhouyi*

yi dandao yan zhi 《周易》以丹道言之). He defines the relationship between *Yijing* terms and *neidan* terms as “metaphorical” (*yu* 喻). We thus have his explicit statement of how he understands his own exegetical operation when he talks about the *Yijing* concepts of the main text by the (metaphorical) means of alchemy. And he explains how he relates the *Taiji Tu*, which is based on *Yijing* terminology, to the *Qingjing jing* text that uses the same terminology, which, however, is read by Wang as allegory of the practical process of inner alchemy. As before, this interpretation is finally turned into the first person perspective (*wu shen* 吾身).

Comparing commentarial text and *tu* there is enough common ground to render the relation of the main text to the diagram plausible. The main difference between Zhou Dunyi’s *Taiji Tu* and Wang’s diagram here is Wang’s addition of text parts of the *Qingjing Jing* to the diagram, which, however, perfectly match the symmetry of the dualistic structure of the diagram; Wang manages to make the diagram match the passage from the *Qingjing Jing*.

The diagram shows the correlative relationships of the binary opposites in a much clearer two-dimensional (rather than textual-linear) arrangement but lacks the complexity of the textual commentary and again the dimension of alchemical practice and first person perspective. By making use of this diagram Wang Jie refers to the Daoist tradition of diagrams associated with this diagram. He thereby affiliates his other commentarial diagrams to the *Taiji Tu* that expresses general and abstract cosmological truths rather than to the Confucian tradition of commentarial diagrams.



The diagram does not take up the textual commentary's references to the three treasures of human life or inner alchemy. The discourse on *qi*, which runs through the entire written commentary is not reflected in the diagram – a further evidence that the diagrams in this commentary do not serve to illustrate the *neidan* practice discussed in the written commentaries. The aim of the diagram is to explain the two units of the main passage in a binary order in which heaven and man are distinguished as two examples of the same duality of purity and turbidity. The dualistic concepts of *yin* and *yang*, life (*ming*) and nature (*xing*) and the two trigrams *qian* and *kun* are correlated accordingly. Referring back to the main text in its conclusion at the bottom the diagram makes an entirely different point in placing purity and turbidity on the side of *yang* and movement and tranquillity on the side of *yin*. As the title of the *Scripture of Purity and Tranquility* indicates, the important parts of these binary concepts are purity (*qing* 清) and tranquillity (*jing* 靜). Now, in the Neo-Confucian correlative cosmology

as set up by Shao Yong whom Wang Jie basically follows, purity clearly belongs to the *yang* side and tranquillity to the *yin* side. The diagram thus highlights the focus on *qing* (as *yang* on the right side) and *jing* (as *yin* on the left side) and their mutual relationship in the two sentences of the main text simply through means of spatial arrangement in a visual composition of two binary lines which run through different correlative classes.

Paragraph §9

Paragraph nine of Wang's text again displays a parallel construction forming a consecutive sequence in which the former sentence seems to be the condition for the following.

If you are always able to

Get rid of desires for good. Then the mind will be calm.

Cleanse your mind. Then the spirit will be pure.

Naturally,

The six desires won't arise.

The three poisons are destroyed.³⁰

The written commentary starts its explanations with the last part of the text explaining the six desires and three poisons in the Buddhist reference system and then explains more general concepts of desires, body and heart-mind. Wang refers to Buddhist and Daoist dogmatic systematizations and combines them quoting *Duren Jing* 《度人經》³¹ and *Daode Jing*. He

Naturally,
The mind will be calm and
The spirit will be pure.
The six desires won't arise.
The three poisons are destroyed.³²

The diagram follows this argument of the main text in opposing the two procedures of eliminating desires and of cleansing the heart as two parallel steps. At the bottom it shows the parallel construction of the text, with two main parts each consisting of a two character introduction in the middle followed by two parallel sentences. Striking about the commentary is again that through the spatial representation two sides of body and mind are created which are opposed to each other on the same level. The commentary thus decodes the interlocking parallel style of the text,³³ lays it open and thereby creates a further dimension of meaning of the text in that it identifies the six desires with the body and the three poisons with the mind. The written commentary supports this identification since it explains the three poisons with the three corpse spirits, which lead men astray if their thoughts are not upright (*zheng*). But it

常能遣其欲而心自靜澄其心而神自清自
然六欲不生三毒消滅克己復禮

（身）
（天光也）

在身爲心
非禮勿視非禮勿聽
非禮勿言非禮勿動

在心爲神
無眼耳鼻舌身意
無色聲香味觸法

常能

遣其欲而心靜
澄其心而神清

自然

六欲不生
三毒消滅

《遺書》 of Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107) and other texts. These two aspects are then further elaborated in two quotations from the Analects 12.1 of Confucius (*Lunyu*) on the right (and thus corresponding to the body and the desires): “Do not look at what is not in accordance with the rites, do not listen to what is not in accordance with the rites, do not speak when it is not in accordance with the rites, do not act when it is not in accordance with the rites”³⁴ and the Buddhist Heart Sutra (*Xin Jing* 《心經》) on the left side (and thus corresponding to the mind and the spirit): “[in emptiness, there is no form, no feeling, no thought, no will, no consciousness.] There are no eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind. There is no seeing, no hearing, no smelling, no tasting, no touching, no imagining.”³⁵ Both, like the Daoist text, argue against the priority of sensual actions in opposition to the rules of ritual (*li* 禮) and *dharma* (*fa* 法) and both are similar in their rhetorical composition – as if they belonged together – clearly referring to the body and the mind aspect. Instead of illustrating the written commentary, which again interprets the main text in terms of inner alchemical practice in a first person’s perspective, the diagrammatical commentary attempts at elucidating the systematic binary pattern of the text’s meaning and further supports its interpretation through adding other texts, expressing their correspondence to each other as well as to the other parts of the text by their horizontal and vertical arrangement.

III Conclusion

The analysis of these five text examples reveals a twofold reading of the *Qingjing Jing* by Wang Jie. In the first (written) commentary Wang introduces theoretical concepts to interpret the main text in regard to personal inner alchemical practice. He refers to general principles of inner alchemy and relates them to the philosophical Daoist propositions of the main text. The main aim of the written commentary lies in providing an inner alchemical reading of the *Yijing* and *Daode Jing* concepts as laid out in the text of the *Qingjing Jing*.

In the second (diagrammatic) commentary he provides a spatial arrangement of the main elements of the text correlating them in binary and triple orders as well as to quotes from other texts and elements from the written commentary. The diagrammatical form which since Song times is mainly practiced in Neo-Confucian text exegesis is much better suited to express the exact logical relationship of identity, analogy, parallelism or cause and effect between given phrases from different contexts and to interlink them (through visual means) than the written text, which can only quote phrases one after another and is therefore used to formulate the narrative.

Zheng Jixiong argues that textual commentaries were in general closer to the textual meaning and that in contrast diagrammatical commentaries were more free to depart from the basic meaning of a text and to construct new meanings. As the diagrammatic mode is less bound to the formulaic literary reference frame of the textual tradition but operates in a visual realm, which appears to be more open, abstract and conceptual, it provides a better mode of conceptual interpretations in the more general light of any ideology.³⁶ In the case of Wang Jie's commentaries, however, this seems not to apply. To the contrary, the diagrammatic commentary appears to stick much closer to the main text analysing its argumentative structure and emphasizing its argument whereas the written commentary reforms and reformulates the text to match inner alchemical practice. The diagrammatic form is thus analytically harder and more transparent. Sometimes it even elucidates the grammar of the main text through its arrangement of sequences of text parts. In paragraph 26, for example, the six four-word-phrases; *Fannao wangxiang. Youku shenxin. Bianzao zhuoru. Liulang shengsi. Chang chen kuhai. Yong shi zhendao.* 煩惱妄想。憂苦身心。便遭濁辱。流浪生死。常沉苦海。永失真道。 are clearly arranged in the following pattern: if (*ru shi* 如是) 1 then necessarily (*bi* 必) 2, if 3 then necessarily 4 and if 5 then necessarily 6. The sequence of the units 1-6 is thus arranged in three pairs of cause and effect.

In the following last paragraph 27 a sequence of four units 1-4: *Zhenchang zhi dao. Wuzhe zide. De wudao zhe. Chang qingjing yi.* 真常之道。悟者自得。得悟道者。常清靜矣。 is arranged in the following order: therefore it is said (*gu yun* 故云) 1, 2: is that by which (*suoyi* 所以): 3, 4. In this case 1 is the cause of 3 and 2 is the cause of 4. These are very clear interpretative instructions of how to read this text.

In that way the textual units of the diagrams, which are often quotes from well known texts, are clearly related to each other in a logic of cause and effect, of parallelisms, contrasts and paradoxes and convince – much more than any linear text – through their perfect symmetrical form that embodies the true order of the cosmos.

Thinking about the lessons of Chinese hermeneutics to be drawn from this analysis, Wang's twofold reading, first in an allegorical and applicative sense of inner alchemical practice and then in a structural sense of correlative argument reminds us of the manifold levels of scriptural interpretation known in the Christian tradition as patristic hermeneutics that started with Origen (ca. 185-254) and the church fathers and found its most elaborated form in John Cassian's (ca. 360 – 435) theory of the four senses of Scripture, which in turn lead to four

methods of interpreting the Scriptures in a literal/historical, an allegorical (mystical), a tropological (moral), and an anagogical (spiritual) way, which was the main exegetical reading strategy throughout the middle ages.³⁷ Wang Jie's first mode of interpretation resembles most the two modes of *allegoria* and *tropologia*, which were closely related to each another,³⁸ whereby the specific "turn" of *tropologia* in this context refers more to a *conversio* to purification than to moral practice.³⁹ The second mode resembles the anagogical mode in that it represents the textual elements of the *Qingjing Jing* as parts of the perfect correlative order of the overall meaning of Heaven and Earth. The perfect symmetric form of the diagrams makes them semiotic objects with quasi-magical character the perfect meaning of which gains evidence through its parallelism of content and form. The aesthetic form of the diagrams further creates a poetic dimension, which combines and unifies image and text and produces its own evidence of "sensuously sense".⁴⁰

Interpreted in this light of a twofold reading the relationship between the two commentarial modes is a complementary one in which both commentaries highlight different senses of the text much in the way patristic hermeneutics operated. Whereas the first one chooses the linear narrative mode to elaborate on the allegorical sense adding further explanations to single elements of the main text, the second one uses the diagrammatical mode to spatially depict the anagogical sense elucidating argumentative structures of the text as cosmological structures. At the same time the two modes represent Daoist and Confucian readings of the text and are a perfect expression of a syncretistic *sanjiao*-approach that has been clearly laid out in the introduction and is emphasized through the many quotes from the three canons in both the text and the diagrams.

This manifold reading is not an invention of Wang Jie but is modelled upon the interpretative mode of the *Yijing*, which by the different layers of its appended commentaries is also read in many divergent senses. This hermeneutic methodology of a manifold reading to illuminate complementary aspects of a text that was well established in the Confucian tradition stands in opposition to Chan commentaries that (also in reference to the *Yijing*) made use of diagrams and a second (and even third) commentary by the same author such as Caoshan Benji's 曹山本寂 (840-901) commentaries to Dongshan Liangjie's 洞山良价 (807-869) *Five Positions* (*Wuwei* 《五位》) in which the second commentary destroys the meaning construction of the first commentary out of didactic purposes to teach the reader not to stick to any definite concepts to then elaborate on this in the third commentary.⁴¹ Although his commentary is full of quotes from Buddhist scriptures Wang Jie fully remains within the established methodological frame of Confucian hermeneutics of multiple senses. In terms of

doctrinal approach, however, we find an innovation in Wang's transcending of doctrinal confines. His choice of two different exegetical modes (textual and diagrammatic) enables him to establish two distinct readings side by side without being forced to systematically connect them. The diagrammatic form, well established as supplementary part of text commentaries thus serves as a device to add a further independent layer of textual interpretation that is different yet equally valid. In composing this twofold commentary, Wang Jie thus chooses an exegetical form that is most suited to embody the text's central concept of a unity and an interplay of the opposites *qing* and *jing* and to realize this dynamics of oppositions in his own exegetical practice.

Endnotes

I wish to thank Friederike Assandri for her encouragement, her support and her precise editing of a rather disorderly paper. I also would like to thank Cheng Chung-ying for his helpful suggestions as to how the paper could be changed from a mere descriptive narrative to a more philosophical reflection.

¹ Cf. *Zhengtong Daozang*, Dongshen Bu, Yujue Lei, Shizi Lei 《正統道藏·洞神部·玉訣類·是字號》 DZ 760 (fasc. 533). The texts of the *Daozang* will be referred to according to the numbering in Kristopher Schipper and Franciscus Verellen, *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the Daozang* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

² Important impulses to the field have been generated by the conference series on the theory and application of diagrams of which the fourth was held in June 28-30, 2006 at Stanford University.

³ Cf. Umberto Eco, *La ricerca della lingua perfetta nella cultura europea* (Rome: Laterza, 1993). English translation: *The Search for the Perfect Language* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995).

⁴ Cf. Michael Evans, "The Geometry of the Mind," *Architectural Association Quarterly* 12 (1980): 32-55.

⁵ Cf. Francesca Bray et al., *Graphics and Text in the Production of Technical Knowledge in China: The Warp and the Weft* (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 2007). Florian Reiter, "Some Remarks on the Chinese Word T'u. Chart, Plan, Design," *Oriens* 32 (1990): 308-327. For the tradition of Chinese thought see in particular the work of Michael Lackner, "Die Verplanung des Denkens am Beispiel der *tu*," in *Lebenswelt und Weltanschauung im frühneuzeitlichen China*, ed. Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1990), 133-156; "Argumentation par diagrammes. Une architecture à base de mots. Le *Ximing* (l'Inscription Occidentale) depuis Zhang Zai jusqu'au Yanjitu," *Extrême Orient-Extrême Occident* 14 (1992): 131-168; "La position d'une expression dans le texte: explorations diagrammatiques de la signification," *Extrême Orient-Extrême Occident* 18 (1996): 35-51; "Was Millionen Wörter nicht sagen können: Diagramme zur Visualisierung klassischer Texte im China des 13. bis 14. Jahrhunderts," *Zeitschrift für Semiotik* 22, no. 2 (2000): 209-237; "Diagrams as an Architecture by Means of Words: the *Yanji tu*," in *Graphics and Text in the Production of Technical Knowledge in China: The Warp and the Weft*, ed. Francesca Bray et al. (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 2007), 341-381.

⁶ For a detailed study of the history, the different kinds and hermeneutical approaches of *Yijing* diagrams see Zheng Jixiong, “*Cong Jingdian Quanshi de Jiaodu Lun RuDao Yi Tu de Leixing yu Bianyi* 〈從經典詮釋的角度論儒道《易》圖的類型與變異〉,” *Renwen Xuebao* 《人文學報》 24 (2001): 93-184. Also available online at http://www.history.ntu.edu.tw/MOEProject/paper/paper_245.PDF (18.08.09).

⁷ Cf. Anna Seidel, “Imperial treasures and Taoist sacraments: Taoist roots in the apocrypha,” *Tantric and Taoist studies in honour of R.A. Stein*, ed. Michel Strickmann, vol. 2, (Brussels: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques* 21, 1983), 291-371.

⁸ Cf. Michael Lackner, “Was Millionen Wörter nicht sagen können,” op. cit., 213–214.

⁹ Cf. Catherine Despeux, *Taoïsme et corps humain: Le Xiuzhentu* (Paris: Guy Trédaniel Editeur, 1994); Martina Darga, *Das alchemistische Buch von innerem Wesen und Lebensenergie* (München: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1999); Monika Drexler, *Daoistische Schriftmagie. Interpretationen zu den Schriftamuletten Fu im Daozang* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 1994).

¹⁰ Cf. Peter Acker, *Liu Chuxuan (1147-1203) and his Commentary on the Daoist Scripture Huangdi yinfu jing* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006), 59-61.

¹¹ Cf. Schipper/Verellen, op. cit., vol. 2, 1171.

¹² Cf. the bibliographical notices on Wang in Schipper/Verellen, op. cit., vol. 3, 1279.

¹³ The term *hunran* has its origin in the *Xunzi* 《荀子》 already in three senses: being without order (cf. *Xunzi* first sentence of chapter six: “*Fei Shier Zi*”), dull or hidden and unknown (Cf. *Xunzi* both usages in chapter eight “*Ru Xiao*” in the answer to the fourth question of King Zhao) and from Song times on became to be used in a broader sense in the Daoist context referring to the three crucial usages of *hun* in the *Daode Jing*.

¹⁴ See his colophon to *Qing'an Yingchan Zi Yulu* 《清庵瑩蟾子語錄》, DZ 1060, Despeux in Schipper/Verellen op. cit., vol. 2, 1148.

¹⁵ Cf. Kong Linghong, *SongMing Daojiao Sixiang Yanjiu* 《宋明道教思想研究》 (Beijing: Zongjiao Wenhua Cbs, 2002), 388. Cf. Qing Xitai, *Zhongguo Daojiao Shi* 《中國道教史》, vol. 3, (Chengdu: Sichuan Renmin Cbs, 1993), 492–496 and 500–502.

¹⁶ For a similar analysis see Zheng Jixiong, op. cit., 107-109, for the *Yijing* see 119ff.

¹⁷ Cf. Joachim Gentz, “Die Drei Lehren (*sanjiao*) Chinas in Konflikt und Harmonie. Figuren und Strategien einer Debatte,” in *Religionen Nebeneinander: Modelle religiöser Vielfalt in Ost- und Südostasien*, eds. Edith Franke and Michael Pye (Münster et al: Lit-Verlag, 2006), 17–40. See also Florian Reiter, *Grundelemente und Tendenzen des religiösen Taoismus* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 1988). Cf. Kong Linghong, op. cit., 388.

¹⁸ Cf. Livia Kohn's translation at <http://www.silkqin.com/02qnp/27sjts/sj03qjj.htm>. (13.06.2007).

¹⁹ Cf. preface to *Dadan Zhizhi* 《大丹直指》 DZ 244 (fasc. 115) ascribed to Qiu Chuji, a text that also illustrates its explanations with diagrams.

²⁰ Cf. his *Yinfu Jing Jiasong Jiezhushu* 《陰符經夾頌解注》, first role as quoted in Qing Xitai, op. cit., 493.

²¹ For a detailed analysis of the historical development of the *Taiji Tu* and its origin see Zheng Jixiong, op. cit., who does not take it as a Daoist diagram, see 131.

²² Wang Jie often uses a composition technique in which the last part of the commentary concludes one passage and prepares and leads over to the next text passage, supplementing it by remarks at the beginning of his commentary of the following passage that this passage continues the former passage. This double function of a text passage referring back and forth, connecting and interweaving different parts of the text is a well established feature of ancient Chinese text compositions. Cf. Joachim Gentz, “Zwischen den Argumenten lesen. Zu

zweifach gerichteten Verbindungsstücken zwischen Argumenten in frühen chinesischen Texten,” in *Komposition und Konnotation – Figuren der Kunstprosa im Alten China*, eds. Joachim Gentz and Wolfgang Behr (*Bochumer Jahrbuch zur Ostasienforschung* 29 [2005]), 35–56).

²³ The original actually has: *wu bu zhi qi ming, qiang zi zhi yue dao, qiang wei zhi ming yue da*. 吾不知其名，強字之曰道，強為之名曰大。

²⁴ Cf. Michael Ing, “Zhu Xi’s Ti-Yong: Context and Interpretation” at: <http://smedia.vermotion.com/media/12002/resources/IngZhusTiYong.pdf> (17.08.09).

²⁵ Cf. Qing Xitai, op. cit., 492.

²⁶ Cf. the detailed study on the *Taiji Tu* by Zheng Jixiong, op. cit.

²⁷ Cf. DZ 1068, facs. 738. For a dating see Isabel Robinet (Paule Wissing transl.), “The Place and Meaning of the Notion of Taiji in Taoist Sources Prior to the Ming Dynasty,” *History of Religions* 29, no. 4 (1990): 373–411. Cf. also Schipper/Verellen, op. cit., vol. 2, 1182.

²⁸ *Fu dao zhe. You qing you zhuo. You dong you jing. Tian qing di jing. Nan qing nü zhuo. Nan dong nü jing. Jiang ben liu mo. Er sheng wanwu. Qingzhe zhuo zhi yuan. Dongzhe jing zhi ji.* 夫道者。有清有濁。有動有靜。天清地濁。天動地靜。男清女濁。男動女靜。降本流末。而生萬物。清者濁之源。動者靜之基。 Cf. Livia Kohn’s translation, op. cit.

²⁹ This sentence has been questioned since in Daoism tranquillity (as connected to nothingness – *wu*) is mostly taken as the basis of movement (as belonging to the realm of being – *you*) and the relation proposed here therefore appears counter-intuitive. The slightly longer and “possibly earlier” (cf. Livia Kohn, “*Qingjing jing* 清靜經 Scripture of Clarity and Quiescence,” *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio, London: Routledge, 2007, pp. 800–801, p. 800) version *Laojun Qingjing Xinjing* 《老君清靜心經》 that can be found in chapter 17 of the *Yunji qijian* 《雲笈七籤》 has the reverse sentence in a parallel passage: *Laojun yue: Fu dao, yi qing yi zhuo, yi jing yi dong. Qingjing wei ben, zhuodong wei mo. Gu yang qing yin jing; nan qing nü zhuo, nan dong nü jing. Jiang ben liu mo, er sheng wanwu. Qingzhe zhuo zhi yuan, jingzhe dong zhi ji.* 老君曰：夫道，一清一濁，一靜一動。清靜為本，濁動為末。故陽清陰濁，陽動陰靜；男清女濁，男動女靜。降本流末，而生萬物。清者濁之源，靜者動之基。 We therefore find a number of editions of the *Qingjing Jing* in which this sentence is reversed into: *Jingzhe dong zhi ji* 靜者動之基。 Some authors have interpreted the “inverted” relation of the *Qingjing Jing* as an indicator for a Confucian influence on the text (cf. Tao Mujian, “Taishang Laojun Shuochang Qingjing Jing de Shizhi Shi Ruxue” 《太上老君說常清靜經》的实质是儒学 at <http://www.wyzxsx.com/Article/Class18/200907/95151.html>, [31.03.10]), others have explained it as a textual means to make the reader attentive of the fact that movement and tranquillity actually have to be taken as mutual sources that imply each other like yin and yang and have no fixed causative order (cf. Qing Qing at http://blog.sina.com.tw/heart_family/article.php?pbid=71337&entryid=585493, [31.03.10]). Again, the *Taijitu Shuo* with its concept that “Activity and stillness alternate; each is the basis of the other” (cf. the translation by Joseph A. Adler at <http://www2.kenyon.edu/Depts/Religion/Fac/Adler/Writings/TJTS-Zhu.pdf>, [31.03.10]) might have been the source for such an understanding.

³⁰ *Chang neng: yi qi yu, er xin zi jing. Cheng qi xin, er shen zi qing. Ziran. Liuyu bu sheng. Sandu xiaomie.* 常能：遣其欲，而心自靜。澄其心，而神自清。自然。六欲不生。三毒消滅。 Cf. Livia Kohn’s translation, op. cit.

³¹ The *Duren Jing* (Scripture on Salvation) is translated and commented in Stephen R. Bokenkamp’s *Early Daoist Scriptures* (Berkeley: California University Press, 1997).

³² *Ziran, xin zi qing, er shen zi qing. Liuyu bu sheng. Sandu zi xiaomie yi.* 自然, 心自靜, 而神自清。六欲不生。三毒自消滅矣。

³³ For the notion of “interlocking parallel style” to which this paper is dedicated see Rudolf G. Wagner, “Interlocking Parallel Style: Laozi and Wang Bi,” *Études Asiatiques* 34, no.1 (1980): 18–58. See also id., *The Craft of a Chinese Commentator: Wang Bi on the Laozi* (Albany: SUNY, 2000), 53-113.

³⁴ *Fei li wu shi, fei li wu ting, fei li wu yan, fei li wu dong* 非禮勿視，非禮勿聽，非禮勿言，非禮勿動。

³⁵ *Wu yan er bi she shen yi, wu se sheng xiang wei chu fa* 無眼耳鼻舌身意，無色声香味触法。

³⁶ Zheng Jixiong, op. cit., 146-147.

³⁷ Cf. Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis* vol. 2, *The Four Senses of Scripture* (Michigan/Edinburgh: T&T Eerdmans and Clark Publishing Co., 2000). Origin. *Exégèse médiévale 2: Les quatre sens de l'écriture* (Paris: Montaigne, 1959).

³⁸ Cf. Lubac, op. cit., 129.

³⁹ Lubac explains the effect of *tropologia* as a ‘turn in speech’ towards a conversion to moral action. Cf. 129. Wang Jie’s parallel formulation can be found in his commentary to §2: “Those who are good in exploring it turn to themselves and search it within their own self” (*shan canjiu zhe, fan shen qiu zhi wo shen* 善參究者反身求之我身).

⁴⁰ Cf. Stephan Bogen and Felix Thürlemann, “Jenseits der Opposition von Text und Bild. Überlegungen zu einer Theorie des Diagramms und des Diagrammatischen,” in *Die Bildwelt der Diagramme Joachims von Fiore. Zur Medialität religiös-politischer Programme im Mittelalter*, ed. Alexander Patschovsky (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2003), 22.

⁴¹ Cf. the lengthy dissertation of Dieter Plempe, “Die Entstehung der Lehre von den *Fünf Positionen*: Tung-shans *Fünf Positionen des Einseitigen und des Rechten* und Ts’ao-shans *Hymnen zu den einzelnen Positionen* im Vergleich,” Ph. D. Diss. University of Heidelberg 1998. Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, no. 9949650, 2000.